

WEM RURAL DISTRICT COUNCILANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR THE YEAR 1943

Mr. Chairman and Gentlmen,

I have the honour to present my Second Annual Report.

The Ministry of Health has requested that the report should be prepared on lines similar to those for the previous four years, dealing chiefly with subjects of current interests.

Restrictions are to be taken, as last year, as regard the publication of population figures etc.

Arrangements are to be made for the preservation of all records which cannot be published in this report.

Your obedient servant,

L. WILSON EVANS.

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

Name.	Qualifications.	Office Held.	Whole or Part time.
L. Wilson Evans	M.B., B.S., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.	Medical Officer of Health.	Part.
A.P. Roberts.	A.M.Inst.B.E., C.R.S.I.	Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor.	Whole.

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1943

Birth Rate per 1,000 population	16. 5.
Wem Urban District	19. 9.
England and Wales	16. 5.
Death of Infants under 1 year per 1,000 births	57.
Wem Urban District	64.
England & Wales	49.
Still births per 1,000 population	0.38.
Wem Urban District	0.85.
England and Wales	0.54.
Death Rate per 1,000 population	11. 9.
Wem Urban District	16. 5.
England and Wales	12. 1.

CHIEF CAUSES OF DEATH

Heart Disease	M. 23	F. 13	36.
Cancer	M. 13	F. 9	22.
Nephritis	M. 5	F. 5	10.
Intracranial Vascular lesions	M. 4	F. 5	9.
Violence	M. 4	F. 1	5.
Pneumonia	M. 2	F. 2	4.
Death from Measles	Nil.		
Death from Whooping Cough	1.		
Deaths from Diarrhoea under 2 yrs.	Nil.		
Maternal Deaths	Nil.		

It was hardly to be expected that the exceptional figures of last year would be maintained, but the vital statistics as far as they are an indication of the public health can be said to be satisfactory.

The birth rate with the rest of the Country continued high and the death rate though higher than last year's record figure is below the average. The natural increase of the population was 49. This is the fifth consecutive year that no deaths as a result of childbirth have been recorded which is a noteworthy achievement for the maternity and midwifery services in the district,

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES

Disease	0	1-	2-	3-	5-	10-	15-	25-	45-	65 or over	Total
	M.F.	M.F.	M.F.	M.F.	M.F.	M.F.	M.F.	M.F.	M.F.	M.F.	
Erysipelas	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	1 -	- 2	1 -	1 1	6
Diphtheria	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	-
Pneumonia	- -	- -	- -	1 -	1 2	- 1	- -	3 1	3 1	1 1	15
Measles	1 -	9 9	- -	8 17	29 29	15 10	3 3	1 -	- -	- -	134
Scar. Fever	- -	- 1	- -	2 -	2 3	1 2	- 1	1 2	- 1	- 1	17
Whooping Cough	1 3	4 -	- -	7 4	9 5	1 2	- -	- -	- -	- -	36
Puerperal Pyrexia	2 cases										

8 cases of Scarlet Fever were admitted to Isolation Hospital.

This disease nowadays is generally of a very mild form and where it is possible for a case to be nursed and isolated at home that is the best course to pursue, except where any member of the household is employed in the preparation or distribution of food for public consumption. This is especially important in the case of milk. The problem of dealing with this disease is complicated by the fact that only a proportion of individuals infected develop the rash characteristic of "Scarlet Fever" with the result that in addition to the cases notified there are others equally infectious, suffering from tonsillitis, quinsy or similar condition.

Measles was prevalent, but it was of a mild form and there were no deaths.

There were no cases of Diphtheria notified.

Diphtheria Immunisation

Immunisation against Diphtheria has made progress. The following figures show the percentage of children considered to be immunised at the end of each year since 1940.

	1940.	1941.	1942.	1943.
Children under 5 years.	1%	13%	34%	40%
Children 5-15 years.	14%	26%	51%	53%

TUBERCULOSIS

Respiratory.

New Cases	died.
M. F.	M. F.
3 3	2 -

Ages:
M. 17;23;50. F. 20;30;39.

Non-Respiratory.

New Cases.	died.
M. F.	M. F.
2 3	- 1.

Ages:
M. 4;18. F. 4;43;46.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY
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Number of cases on Register at end of 1943.

Respiratory.

M. F.
14. 15.

29

Non-Respiratory.

M. F.
9. 15.

24.

The register of cases were revised during the year with the result that many names were removed, many had been cured, others had left the district and some had died.

Water:

Houses in the Parishes, of Prees, Clive, Grinshill, Stanton, Barkers Green, Aston have a piped water supply comprising some 474 houses. Approximately 15% of the houses in the district have a piped supply. Information of the proportion of those which obtain their water by standpipe is not available.

The supplies to Clive, Grinshill, and Stanton are privately owned; that to Prees belongs to the Council and that to Barkers Green and Aston comes from the Wom District Council supply. Samples taken have shown the water to be of satisfactory quality.

The Clive supply gave some trouble, it was at times short and intermittent.

In the greater proportion of the district the houses are supplied from wells. In some villages a certain number of houses obtain their water from the village pump. Several houses may share a pump, others have their own pump. Samples taken during the year have shown the water to be of variable quality. A Bill recently presented to Parliament has for its object an improved water supply for the villages a commodity which is so necessary for the health and well being of the people. This authorises the Minister of Health to make contributions towards the expenses incurred by a Local Authority in the provision of, or the improvement of water supplies and sewerage in Rural Districts, and also extends the duties of local authorities with respect to the supply of water in Rural localities to the provision of a piped supply of water to every locality in their district in which there are schools or houses: this obligation being limited to doing that which is practicable at a reasonable cost.

HOUSING:

Number of inhabited houses -- 3004.

Percentage of houses built by the Local Authority since 1919 -- 5.4%

The Council owns 162 houses of 3, 4 and 5 bedroomed types. 28 were transferred from the Whitchurch Rural Council at the time of the alterations of the boundaries and built under the 1919 Housing Act. 98 houses were built under the 1924 Act and the remaining 36 houses under the 1936 and 1938 Acts to deal with overcrowding and houses unfit for human habitation. One house was dealt with under the Housing (Rural) Workers Act. A total of 22 have been reconditioned since this Act came into force.

The Council has decided upon a programme of 80 houses to be built in the first year of the post war period.

An important report on Rural Housing has been issued by the Ministry of Health. This report points out that it is necessary that improvement of housing conditions in the Country should keep pace with the progress

in the towns lest the best and most enterprising youth of the countryside should be driven to seek accommodation in the town. The main objectives of post-war housing are summarised as follows:-

- (1) A concentration of effort to re-start rural housing activities after the war on the widest scale then practicable.
- (2) The acceleration of the rate of progress to the maximum extent as labour and materials become available.
- (3) A fair allocation of labour and materials between town and country, so that the rural population does not suffer.
- (4) A planned programme to bring rural housing conditions up to the highest possible level and at a given period of years.
- (5) The raising of housing standards in backward districts up to the best attained by progressive authorities.
- (6) A financial basis for new houses and building in rural areas which will make it possible to give the agricultural worker as good a home as the worker in other industries.

It is pointed out that essential steps preliminary to any long term programme should be a thorough and comprehensive survey of housing conditions in every rural district. By this means only can the full extent of the problem be known and adequate programmes drawn up for repairs, reconditioning and new building. The survey should be directed to the classification of every working class house in the district according to the standard of accommodation and amenities provided and its state of repair. Houses being classified as follows:-

- (1) Houses fit for habitation or with minor defects only.
- (2) Houses requiring structural alterations or repairs.
- (3) Houses requiring reconditioning.
- (4) Houses requiring demolition or replacement.

If this survey is to be used as a basis for a long term programme it must be substantially completed during the first year following the end of the European war. In order to carry this out it may be necessary to confine detailed inspection to houses coming in categories 2, 3 and 4, those under "1" being kept until after the first survey has been completed.

The necessity for a reasonable standard of uniformity throughout the Country is stressed.

It is recommended that in each County there should be set up forthwith a Joint Committee consisting of representatives of all the Rural District Councils and of the County Council, in order to assist in the steps being taken to prepare for the resumption of building and consider ways and means of improving the general level of rural housing throughout the area and would also afford the means of making arrangements for the preliminary survey of housing conditions in rural districts as far as co-ordination of standards for demolition, reconditioning and repair within the county.

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORTMilk

The number of undesignated producers of milk for 1943 was 516, an increase of 5.

143 inspections were made during the year in this area, and the producers of milk are doing their best to produce clean milk. In a few cases I have had to complain of the neglect of lime-washing, and the grooming of cows, but the excuse is shortage of labour, but I have followed the complaints up and improvements have been made.

No complaints as to the quality of the milk were made in this area.

One new cowshed was erected during the year.

Housing:

One case of overcrowding was abated by the addition of extra sleeping accommodation; this was dealt with under the Rural Workers' Housing Act.

The general housing conditions are that the smaller houses are full up with munition workers and Service Men's families, who are posted in this area.

Water Supply:

A number of samples of water were taken during the year. Several wells require cleaning and I have given instructions for this work to be carried out, but Messrs. Wyatt of Whitchurch who do this work are finding it difficult to get labour, but have promised to attend to the wells in the near future.

Meat:

Regular visits have been made to the Ministry of Food Slaughter House at Whitchurch and the following inspections made.

MEAT INSPECTIONS 1943

<u>April.</u>	<u>Cattle</u>	<u>Sheep</u>	<u>Pigs</u>	<u>Condemmed</u>
<u>May.</u>	20	121	0	12 sheep livers. 2 Bovine livers (Cirrhosis)
<u>June.</u>	12	20	0	6 sheep livers.
<u>July.</u>	17	112	0	7 sheep livers. 1 beast's liver. 1 beast's lung (T.B.) 1 beast's heart.
<u>August.</u>	20	98	0	9 sheep livers. 2 beast's livers. 1 beast's heart & tongue (T.B.) 1 beast's stomach T.B. 1 beast's skirt. 3 beast's lungs.
<u>September.</u>	62	90	0	2 beast's livers T.B. 6 sheep livers. 1 set of lungs T.B.

Meat Inspections 1943 - cont.

	<u>Cattle</u>	<u>Sheep</u>	<u>Pigs</u>	<u>Condemmed</u>
<u>October</u>	36	0	0	1 beast & all offal. 1 lung T.B.
<u>November</u>	24	84	0	None.
<u>December</u>	27	50	0	3 Beast's livers.
<u>January</u>	52	68	0	2 beast's livers.
<u>February</u>	10	50	0	None
<u>March</u>	10	50	0	1 beast & all offal. T.B.

It has been necessary to make regular visits to N.A.A.F.I. Canteens,
and quantities of food have been found to be unfit for human consumption.

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Summerville

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